

Mom allegedly stabs daughters with kitchen knife

HOUSTON (AP) — A woman allegedly attacked her two young daughters with a butcher knife Monday and may have tried to force them to take some medication, police said.

The girls suffered multiple stab wounds and were taken to Ben Taub Hospital where they were in stable condition Monday afternoon, officials said.

The oldest girl, who is 8, suffered four stab wounds. Her 5-year-old sister, who was stabbed nine times, underwent surgery earlier Monday.

Hospital spokesman Roger Widmeyer said the 30-year-old mother was under observation at Ben Taub. She had some minor wrist cuts that apparently were self-inflicted, he said.

"She's obviously got some mental problems. We'll either serve a mental health warrant on her or file criminal charges."

—J.C. Mosier, police sergeant

Police Sgt. J.C. Mosier said no charges had yet been filed against the woman.

"She's obviously got some mental problems," Mosier said. "We'll either serve a mental health warrant on her or file criminal charges."

Mosier said the woman also might have forced the girls to take some type of medication before they were stabbed. The girls' stomachs were pumped, but it had not yet been determined if there was any medication in their systems.

The oldest girl escaped from the family's trailer house through a window and was taken to a nearby residence by a passerby. The woman then brought over the youngest girl, Mosier said.

Allegations about King remain under dispute

ATLANTA (AP) — In the days before he was gunned down on a Memphis motel balcony, Martin Luther King Jr. was a pressured, worried man who found himself the leader of a slowing movement.

According to aides, King was on a roller coaster of optimism and doubt. He was still getting criticism for a 1967 speech against the war in Vietnam, and was troubled because he had been unable to keep a Memphis, Tenn., march from turning into a riot. He worried about young blacks' new appetite for violence.

Nearly 22 years after a sniper's bullet killed King on April 4, 1968, his last days have generated renewed interest, in part because of his closest aide's contention that King spent time with two women on the night before he died.

The Rev. Ralph David Abernathy's account of April 3, 1968, has been condemned as false by other black leaders and a woman who says she served dinner to King at her home that night. Abernathy stood by his version as true.

Abernathy said he decided to reveal King's alleged activities because he wanted to show King's human side.

But that human side, according to friends and biographers, already was evident by late March 1968.

Concerned and troubled by people who were supposed to be close to him and had been his colleagues but didn't share his position on the war in Vietnam, said Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., a former student activist who worked with King.

But Lewis said he saw King frequently in the spring of 1968, and "I never saw him in a state of depression. He was looking forward to organizing and mobilizing."

King aide Hosea Williams, a former Atlanta city councilman, said other black leaders placed "all the pressure in the world" on King for his anti-war position.

"He was having some real problems. He suffered severely," Williams said.

Abernathy said King was depressed before his death. When a protest he led in Memphis in late March 1968 turned into a riot, King worried that people no longer would adhere to non-violence as a tool for social change.

He wondered if he should step aside and "let violence run its course," Abernathy wrote in his 1989 autobiography, "And the Walls Came Tumbling Down."

'Silent epidemic' Drug abuse ad campaign targets inhalant abusers

AUSTIN (AP) — An ad campaign calling attention to the "silent epidemic" of inhalant use by children will hit the airwaves this fall, representatives of the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse announced Monday.

Rep. Bill Blackwood, R-Mesquite, who chairs the Legislature's Special Committee on Inhalant Abuse, said the campaign will try to bring to light the "underground problem" of inhalant use by minors.

Children as young as 8 say they sniff some of the 400 commercial and domestic products used as inhalants — including liquid paper, paint, glue, gasoline and freon — because they are bored and frustrated, Blackwood said.

"The big problem with this is that abuse of these substances is so devastating, (causing) permanent, irreversible brain damage," he said. "Many of these adolescents have died the first time through cardiac arrest and various other physical problems caused by inhaling these chemicals."

Statistics on youth admitted to TCADA programs show that inhalant use ranks fourth in drug use among Texas youth, behind only tobacco, alcohol and marijuana.

The average age of clients treated for inhalant addiction is 14 years. Almost one-third of users start inhaling before they reach 11. Twenty-eight percent of all 7th graders in Texas have used inhalants, the figures show.

Dr. Cervando Martinez, a San Antonio professor of psychiatry and member of TCADA's governing board, said cocaine is the only other substance as dangerous as inhalants.

"These are toxic substances diffused right in through the lungs into the blood supply and right up into the brain," he said.

Bob Dickson, TCADA executive director, said inhalant use often leads to other drug use, to violent criminal activity and to dropping out of school.

He said the education campaign — which bears the slogan, "Bringing Texas a new view of human potential" — will not tell people just "don't do drugs."

"We want to lift this whole campaign up to what our potential is if we live healthy," he said. "This will be a positive campaign about healthy living."

The \$750,000, 20-month campaign will kick off with "back-to-school" radio and television spots in September, officials said. The campaign also will include educational materials to be used in schools.

School finance Second special session begins

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas senators began a second special session on school finance Monday by resurrecting their \$1.2 billion reform plan and criticizing Gov. Bill Clements' threat to veto new state taxes.

Meanwhile, House members discussed a state lottery and temporary sales tax increase to pay for court-ordered school finance reform.

Sen. Carl Parker, D-Port Arthur, a leader of the Senate education subcommittee, challenged Clements to present a school funding plan.

"If the governor keeps insisting that we can meet court mandates and do right by the children of Texas within anticipated revenue ... he has an obligation to this Legislature and to the people of this state to sit down and list what he considers as fat," Parker said.

The subcommittee approved 11-3 a bill to put \$1.2 billion more into public schools in 1990-91.

Other senators also criticized Clements, with Sen. Chet Edwards, D-Waco, saying, "It's time for the governor to show some leadership."

But Clements' press secretary, Rossanna Salazar, said the governor supports a school funding formula, and reforms aimed at making educators more accountable for the job they do, proposed by a task force he created.

While Clements has not specified cuts in other budget areas

that would be needed to keep his no-new-taxes pledge and still add education funding, she said, his staff has been actively working on that issue.

Lawmakers are struggling to meet a Texas Supreme Court ruling that the school funding system is unconstitutional because of disparities in funding available to property-rich and -poor school districts.

The court gave lawmakers until May 1 to change the system, which relies on a combination of

"It's time for the governor to show some leadership."

—Chet Edwards, state senator

local property taxes, state aid and some federal funds. But Clements said he will keep lawmakers in special session until they pass a bill spending no more than \$300 million in new education money in 1990-91, which he said could be accomplished without a state tax increase.

The \$1.2 billion bill is the same one senators passed last special session, and Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby said he hoped it would win Senate approval again Tuesday.

Tanker crash forces resident evacuation

BURNET (AP) — About 100 residents of two Burnet subdivisions returned to their homes Monday after being evacuated when a tanker truck carrying an explosive chemical crashed into a dry streambed.

"It went about as smoothly as it could," Burnet County emergency management coordinator Ed Schaefer said.

"The evacuation was a precautionary thing," Schaefer said. "Nobody was really in danger of getting a severe dose of that stuff. There was no danger of a bunch of people getting killed by an explosion."

The residents, who were allowed to return home about 7:15 a.m., were evacuated after the truck, carrying some 6,200 gallons of the chemical vinyl acetate, crashed about 5:30 p.m. Sunday.

The crash killed driver David Ferguson, 36, of Texas City, said the Department of Public Safety office at Lampasas.

The subdivisions border Texas Highway 29, about five miles west of Burnet. Both were downwind of the crash site and authorities feared the toxic fumes emitted from the tanker's cargo would drift to the homes.

Temporary shelters were set up and the residents were evacuated around 9:15 p.m., Schaefer said. A section of the highway near the crash was closed, he said.

Authorities said the crash remained under investigation Monday.

The tanker had been hauling the chemical from a Union Carbide plant at Texas City to Odessa,

Schaefer said.

A passing motorist, who pulled the driver from the truck and tried to resuscitate him, was treated at a local hospital after breathing chemical fumes, Schaefer said.

A fire that consumed the truck's cab did not spread to the cargo, which is explosive, he said.

"A considerable amount of product was spilled," he said. "This was

"The evacuation was a precautionary thing. There was no danger of a bunch of people getting killed by an explosion."

—Ed Schaefer, emergency management coordinator

bad stuff. It had some pretty harmful toxic effects." He said vinyl acetate is used in the manufacture of plastics, paint and adhesives.

Emergency response teams were sent by Union Carbide and the trucking company and transferred the chemical to other trucks. The Texas Water Commission and Environmental Protection Agency dispatched teams to the scene, authorities said.

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